



THE BOSTON EAGLE

#3

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BERNADETTE MAYER

When's it gonna rain, I cant do it without food.

When's it gonna rain, I cant do it without food.

I am was that schizophrenic. All that is true. God go out & look at the  
monday moon again. Perfectly cld be perfectly cold & clear. Moon that was  
moving clouds front of it. A 6 - 8 line poem for the bus. To return to  
archaic bodily states & archaic notions of these states is to make a mess.  
A continent might have a peninsula on it. Try & write yourself out of it.  
Everybody goes direct. Nowhere to go. Glass jars decorate. No cemetery.  
Black holes, cannibals, rhythmic vibrations, no sex drive-in. Go out  
perfectly. She writes all external - keep in touch. Johnny Guitar. Date -  
May 6 or 7, it's 8. Birthday. Mother's Day. Time to hide the bad feelings.  
Notion eyes the cannibal. Again. Anorexia. Nut house. Nut so funny.  
State of mind. It's because I cant say it, I refuse to write it down. I  
reverse, condense, symbolize & converse. Not talking. Not school. The  
workshop is on the ground. What is working?

Detached. When's it gonna rain, I cant do without food, when't it gonna rain.  
What do they hide, a full moon. Some writers. Hear voices. Some see visions.  
Number 2. Clear. A life like you like it. 8 full moons circle the earth  
- murder, children taken away, physics, focus, ice, stories, sleep and armor.  
Sleep. The circus, the epistemology, the booklist, the reading the papers, a  
slip. Into hedges, rows of hedges, cut ones. A bleak dream, going on. No  
craft. Craft is internal. Altered states. Always on top. Nothing nice to  
say. Rude, thoughtless. Ruthless. The Prize or Price of Ruth. Walking  
walking. Animal ideas, like, mouth. A girl again. In pinafore begins to

be being raped by William Burroughs into her cunt. Just today. In class.  
No smoking. Fresh cigarettes. Rhyming. First hot then cold. Both of us.  
A lecture. A fest. A fent. People cant get in touch. People stopped coming  
over. Once it is clear. Out & out. Shadow of her across the light behind  
me. Her pages are turning so you say unnecessary things. Sabotage,  
saboteur, like the diaper. A life circle on the earth, the semblance of a  
long enough clear decision. I shouldnt spend so much time with her, like  
ice. No jokes. I cant make jokes. Incontinent, unfaithful. In store.  
Repercussions, perpetual, repertoire, hangover. See black. Your fantasies  
while masturbating - something about her mother jerking off. A hum. A hum  
inside the belly. Then some madness humming. Rage hums in the chest, where  
it stays, resides, you see, you do not see. Before valium, before valium was  
invented, or found, valerian root. Wears off. Many pills hum there. Hum  
in there. Ripped & torn. Like the mother's belly - I never thought of it.  
Still wet & ready to be. Still wet. Do his too. No me first. Not careful  
at all. Three hours. Stretch it. Strategies. Stopping & Investigating.  
You can make it sound so good. Con-man. Must be me. I moved. And moving,  
say too much.

Like,

Three stories entitles to tempt. Spiritual milk for American babes drawn from  
the breasts of both testaments: the difficulties of storing & transforming  
information into terms of human adaptability are manifold, open, like paper,  
like parents, like book. As Gertrude Stein has pointed out over & over again  
is as mean as a shower in the length of the table means that the body is  
one with its own extensions. This is thought. Someone, I, starts to cry,  
and it goes like a rattle down the length of the table all the way to a man  
even a man, crying, he gets up, jolted, thought is, on the other hand, a



difficulty in itself. There is no guru, there is no guaranteeing its ease of continuing. There is nothing in it, there is something in it & all of it is the same as different as can be. Let me illustrate this with a story: A story which reminds me of a friend who wants everything. This is a friend, this story is one. Or forwards, unless there is a friend, or family, to listen. Rather I should put it this way: (or family). The story begins with parents in parentheses. As usual. Now that may seem to you (who are you friend, family, or foe?), identify yourself, to be a joke or pun. Well there you are, a knowledge of the history of the earth tells us where to look for uranium. Spiritual milk. The sadism as cannibal in aim, burns brightly, brightly burns, caribbean, caribbean. And there they are two parents, sitting on the couch, watching television, during a terrible summer, excuse me for forgetting, end-of-summer thunderstorm. A terrible summer, the system's storm is raging outside, but in our culture we no longer fear these storms due to the invention of lightning rods & other devices which simply remind us of our fears. Oh, & then here are the stories like the one in the paper about the kid who had a twin brother & one of the twins, the original kid I mentioned, was standing by his window looking out over a thunderstorm in the Bronx, New York City, one night, I'm sorry, I forgot, one dark night, & suddenly he was struck dead by lightning, but his twin was not. Where was his twin standing? How did this affect his twin? Did it happen because they were twins? Which is which? Why is what everybody says in grief, but that is another whole story. So, Two parents on the couch. Making it. Now there's a story or stories, now there's a story if they're yours. What's their story? Each one every one in every place, each one has a story, but someone else has written it. This story is getting to be like a visual image & nothing more. Someone said, sometimes I think people are now so fucked around as to what they think they're supposed to be hearing that you could read em anything. How much information is contained in it for

individual message nut-quality needs, if you now know what I mean. Incorporation of the lost object - ingestion as introjection, or, an injection of milk as sense of humor. And then as the ego rejoins the id in sound x sleep. In the previous (above) story, try to distinguish signal from noise. Thank you very much. Is this elation-writing? Is this a woman writing? Is this person a woman? Is this woman elated? Is this a woman's elation? The hunger situation is the deepest point of fixation in the depressions, a model for the later, and famous: "threatened loss of love". Dear Dash (David), I'm having dinner in a restaurant, alone, before the poetry reading. It's a restaurant where they know me, you know, in case I collapse or anything happens. Carol collapsed you know. I've decided to keep this journal at least for tonight, maybe for your information, maybe as a companion. It's not a love letter though of course I was tempted to make it one, or new. In a way I'll write as little as possible. I realized this afternoon I wasn't an infant but it didn't last. Tired, hungry & scared: it's hard to chew leaves. Have taken 1/2 valium & had a beer - the power of the imagination. What's the difference between a child and a grownup. First day of summer, summer solstice. Two years go by. I don't have to eat this dinner. The salad appeals to me more & more the other stuff, cannelloni, seems horrible. I ate an olive, this seems hopeful - never eaten one before. I guess I'm refusing to eat. All of this seems very clear. I should like to eat that, or, I should like to spit it out. And why did you give me this book to read. Anne Angel Bathsheba? I'm not at all confused about it, but I am wondering what's going to happen. I can see the helpless infant, it all fits, what I can't see is this: how does this happen, this transference or pattern or whatever it is. I want to know now, neurologically, sure - & for the layman. It seems a lot different from old notions of feedback & what I said before, see above. I'm chewing just like a baby as though solid food's just too much for me.

Something interesting happened before: the people I saw today, I felt at a distance from them, I didnt try to make them be me, make them into me, as usual. Just business, at least that's what I think to myself, other people act - it's just business, business as usual. I didnt eat much but got some energy. She refused the baby food & ate the salad without teeth. Spend the night alone. -- O.K., I'll try. And did I start writing as a companion to myself, in desperation, out of desperation. Who cares, right at this moment, everything's urgent, everything's new. I wanted to eat for energy, I knew I didnt have to eat, but I wanted to be able to drink relax without getting drunk so I eat or I ate. Along with many still angels, either converted or obsessions, these still people are an immense enterprise, overfilling themselves, throwing selves vigorously headstrong headlong over a precipice into sexual affairs, sexual deals, to suddenly drop them all abruptly with a strikingly suddenly loss. Striking me with sudden loss. Strikingly suddenly lost them. Shorthand notes of manic flight. Well, ha ha, alot of laughing then, I just thought of that song: you make me feel like a natural woman, so what is this & someone said, hope you had chance to tell dylan what you thought of his music. I really missed the boat on eating today, I didnt plan it right, and the secret is eat in front of trusted friends. I just realized how strange, from a baby's point of view, the relationship between a psychoanalyst & his patient is: a psychoanalyst is a person who gives you his own disease, out of love, & then pretends to cure it. Often, like the trickster, he steals people's wives. Breaks with reality, ranging from transient denials through severe "world destruction" - it's only begun and, it's gonna be a long long time. Anarchic. Antarchic. Antarctic. Autonomy. You write & somebody calls & you get cut off. Everybody has a conventional wife in mind. Dont call them up on the phone cause even if they answer their conventional wife is gonna answer. Yessir & whaddayyou want with my husband of myself. You cheat. You

are a murderer. You dream LOST HORIZON is a poem at Radio City, except it's a club. Me & someone (tom?) go to the back to meet R. (except it's Mary Farrell): she's supposed to be with X. except she isn't. Ed'll be mad. She asks me to hold her cape while she (lights a cigarette), then hold something else while she (something else) & so on. Ed wont like seeing her. If X. was with her it'd be easier. We bring her to our seats...& someone (Nick), maybe on a screen, is in the shower without or with a big black woman (who's tan) & her daughter, who's as big as she is, & nobody'll say they're fucking but her, what else would they be doing, she's nude, & the three of them go around together, how can they? Her daughters are big, she knows what's going on. Just lie, continued, starting over - begin again:

Just the head of a girl  
whose shoulders walk the pavement  
cruel numb terrified & drunk  
dont pay no attention to making you  
just want to get high, I'm high

The screen memory is a real memory that conceals another real memory: it deceives as to chronology. What is chronology. Chronology is the science of measuring time in fixed periods, it is the arrangement of events & dates in their order of occurrence. Chronology is the science of timing things perfectly. It has nothing to do with synchronicity. So it seems...so it is. Doing a number on my burning stomach, wont stop, wont open, who's plenty? Goodbye. Epistemophilia - literally a "craving to" - & the grief work; a subsequent emotional catching up, like the grief work, is knowledge. Sleep & mania: two mental end states of de-differentiation: mania & sleep. For the manic person appears supremely awake. He is supremely awake and then, pauses.

Just the head of a girl

whose shoulders walk the pavement  
cruel numb terrified & drunk  
dont pay no attention to making you  
just want to get high, I'm high

We're a group at the New School, all glass, designed like bulbous transparent t.v. sets, all windows, sticking out in rows, with thin columns of sand in between. It's a pyramid. We look out. Preserve things. Chinese people are attacking us, preserve the states of consciousness. My mail's been held up, now I get it all at once. Each piece of mail's a little box, one box is from R. I say: "If R. would only give (send) me a present, then I could (move around, proceed, go out...)". The DREAM WORK. Now I know you like this paper a lot. One thing replaces another. One person, however, does not replace, in any way shape or form, another, that is, no one is anyone else. Now this is to say that you do a person a strange type of disservice by attempting to make him/her conform to the assiduities (whatever they are) of the way shape or form of any other human being in relation to self or others. Especially if you think they're you. Now let me tell you a funny story: up in the hills of Ireland, there is myth about cannibals, which is probably true. They make forays down to the village below to find & eat young lean boys, for lack of Vitamin D, for a need for Vitamin D, for a desire for Vitamin D, from memory of Vitamin D, to fill the Vitamin D requirement. So I drink milk. Even still, we search maps for the location of our work and find the moon on the map of the world. Instead of saying 'moon' it is called 'even'. Note: Too much Vitamin D, in the form of human flesh, causes severe constipation; also, irritability.

Blank dream: a blank dream is a vision of uniform blankness which is a persistent after-image of the breast. The wish to sleep is beginning to be opposed by the wakers & disturbers. Some of them are called the Pay-Backables. Are

hiding out, not in cells, not in restaurants, but on hinges and qualudes,  
I'm hiding out, strung out, & even out, I cant find no, & even hiding, I cant  
find no in, my in to the space, the people's space, is destroyed, collapsed  
in this earthquake, fear epidemic, I've had one before all around me, my in to  
the space is destroyed, my space is absence, even out the window there is real  
disaster. Everything confirms it, I've spread my epidemic to the world, &  
what's my epidemic but the typhus & cholera they fear in nicaragua from heaps  
of dead bodies buried under rubble, bodies that cant be buried, contaminate  
the water, even out, and that's what's there, & even water creates a wall,  
doesnt flow, impenetrable water, solidified with disease in the ruins bodies  
make, I am the masque of this pretty red death, strung out: you take my parts,  
even the parts of my body & string them out like clothes on a line, no cover,  
no sleeves to hide in: even my own house is walled up: I am I would be buried  
alive in this wall of contaminated water I would be eaten and this is what I  
know even though I cant see it. The blank dream, picturing in pure culture  
the fulfillment of the wish to sleep. A cannibal, a masochist & a suicide,  
the wish to sleep. The car comes up over the hill, it doesnt have time to stop,  
cant see the water in time, road of water like stone, even - it turns in to  
water, just around the bend that cuts off your view, tends in to water and this  
is what I see even out the window, I'm out & sex is out as an in, back in  
to the way that people keep working, the whole fucking human race, my in. Even  
that - my last out. A messenger comes in...wait, wake up. The wakers &  
disturbers. Seems to have undergone rich experiences strongly reminiscent of  
an oneiroid subjective state but fugitive in character. What is a dream &  
what is a fugue. An excerpt....who always hallucinated a little grey bird on  
the eve of his recurrent.... There's no ideas, & nothing for them, & you are  
not, the desire I am, so I thought I could make, a transparent book, with  
clear covers, but I've ransacked all the transparencies in the house before,

continuously, & cant go to the store: if only there was a convenient reproducing machine between my place & yours, you know what I mean, if only the fucking vegetable & fruit man drove his horse & cart by, down the street yelling, I'd run down - if only there was a stationary store where I could get a transparent cover for this, goodnight, I'm running you down - not yet. Secret writing, to make time pass to make it pass, someone would kill me, he would not, I am made, secret fucking serious slow, man & woman sure feel the same, & secret fucking serious sure, I am not made there, as someone else, it was this it was not this. Primitive narcissistic trust in sensory experience. The inciters-to-bad-dreams. Some of them are Pay-Backables. You start at the top-left. No you stop there. Sun's out. You cough. By this time you've forgotten everything, so you can begin. Since you forgot everything you have to begin like this: piece of cake, or, the weeds. Human mind. Explosion. A free taxi. Vacant. Storehouse. A man came down from off his mountain chopping wood. He hadnt been up the mountain. He hadnt chopped wood. He looked it, though. (What was Jane Austen's (who died) first sentence?). In two weeks everything changes. Seriousness holds. At the moment everyone's reading: it looks a certain way: "I think you're right" followed by..."I know I'm right". The difference: "I think you're right", pause, "I know I'm right". Which part of your body is warm where will I go tomorrow. Will I, stopped short. You must be rude you must leave traces. Find a place to sit. You have to work with graphs & graph paper, you must forget what you paid for your materials, or, they must be presents, wholly ignored. Then, you must begin with 'night residue' - it cannot be remembered, but it can be found. The finding must take more than five pages. Then you can do whatever you want. This whatever-you-want will be the product, if you need one. Otherwise, or anyway, proceed to deal back. You will sense that something

is moving. Seize on it. Reduce it so it can be read, used, then take the time to look around. I cant tell you any more, except this: right on the corner, two blocks down, at a busy intersection, someone is stealing something. (I'm high.). Success prevents the danger of eating yourself up & of living on your own fat. Language, your language, mine - its susceptibility to the activity of my own musculature. To repeat secret writing, to make time pass to make it pass, in desperation, out of desperation, someone would kill me he would not, I am made, secret fucking serious slow, Man & woman sure feel the same, man & woman sure feel the same & secret fucking serious sure, I am made there as someone else, Be me, remember me, I was this & it was not this. Listen: the world becomes progressively less edible.

May 12, 1945

Being born. I will write in the big book again with the colored pens, no color seems right except this spring green & further real green, real green forest green & what they call bottle green green of bottles, a rich green, I will write in forest green, greens change they develop, and also I will write in lilacs, the sign of being born, someone said. I am scared of the good signs of green the green of earth with feet in or on it, the green of stars seen from the earth, once again I dont know enough words. You have the reason for it. It was a beautiful afternoon. (I think of someone who said that's a pretty cheerful view of things, meaning MEMORY, & meant you dont show the bad side the side the side to the side I guess he meant, I think of someone else who doesnt know what being drunk is who is protective by design, who is the great chopping-wood-man.). So much time's gone by. Some child, a picture of her, she punctuates the book. If you wanted to be mean, if you wanted to



be you could be very good at it, you could be mean. I am an expert. I am not mean. I do not respect people's private property. There is someone there, I dont say much about it. I can sleep here sleep peacefully, I'm almost in the sun, the sun's on the floor, red, next to me, I am somewhat free, we are making a proposal, we are making a careful vow, we are not knowing, we are knowing everything. We are not weeding out, we are full of desire, we are sure, we are uncertain we are pending. I'm scared of being so careful, I'll write in orange, in earth brown-orange seems to be brown, brown seems to be orange, you are beautiful your face is heavy you are like me we are making mischief: hold me. A wind a rain are the details important, do you want them? So much time's gone by. The record is endless & none of it recorded, who needs it? Something else begins, something is beginning, sure, be sure, with me, be me, be mine, I'm still drinking your bottle of wine but I cant say that cause the language is mine & so I did, missing you. Miss, so I'll be you, miss, I am not married but I don't escape your notice, in fact, it was me who came to see you, a clear memory that we exchange, we can change, I am home, you dont escape my notice, a glance, the eyes the hands what a design is terrific in core what a catch, what we've accomplished, what we've done what you see & hear, his ear his hair, what we perceive, you are aware of, a mixing up, & you know us know knowing by now perceptions alike perceptions storing perceive moving perception motion that's the design I'm speaking of through you I am speaking I'm speaking of through you I am speaking to you I find it intricate I find it hard, dont overlook this, the words fight, dont let it go by, a finer point, I need it, black a translucent picture black a power you are fine, no escape, no avoiding, some forgetting yet to do in the middle of a puddle of so much emotion formed on the concrete maybe it is so dear, I'll keep you, I'll have you, you are present at my birthday party, sections of it,

this one, again the concrete one I am revealing you the conscious one conscious now of a day of birth. Absence or loss, by one by one. I've spent all my money & I don't need some. I am tuned to your absence: there's no one here, a lingering. I am not sure, not sure I want my watch back the one that was stolen, I'll let you know, we'll play it by ear. Form of a human part is aware. Is here. There's no telling you point to wanting we haven't missed at all not wide but designed to the mark, if any, if design is free, he is. I hit you, I meet you, I get you, I see you. We were both scared in such a bravery way, it's summer summer course & running open, what? Begin? How ever to begin again, again, I sleep I am asleep I had a baby, it's close. I could go on forever this way but you in the confusion of you for you I must make magic I must stop I've got to stop & Make Magic, magic to feel, to work on you, I get out of the code beyond the secret code which would have worked it would have worked anyway, but since I am you, now, a part of the fusing, the confusion of possible yous, I will milk, impose, I will come out of hiding, it's time, I've already begun: I'm out, look around, it's blue. That blue is me wanting to fade away to fade back into your body to fill you up again. That's why it's blue, a blue of not existing, a sudden blue, I hear the word boy, yes that's what I am, it's surprising, as blue is green, a certain day of the month, a certain year, recorded. It's certain, the wind blows unsteady, we are secure, you are my base, you are full. I milk you. I needed this time. I am not absent. I am knowing you, you have special feelings, special designs, maybe you are present here now just for an instant in the color I saw first like a light between my legs, a glance, the eyes, the hands. I try to grow. I try too hard to grow. Growing is instant. I see it instantly. You are coming, you're feeling good, you're thinking how easy it is, how hard, I'm too big, it feels good. I was careful, wasn't I? I would've died for you, you

warm. You want me anyway. I'm lost where I am, I want to make you just to be sure. But you have bigger plans for me, you feed me. Later I will be your mother. I am sinking. You make me dizzy you make me well. What a blast of power I feel just for an instant, then you are gone, or is it: when you are gone, but it's awful, a curse, how does the wind get in here, here that should be, here that ought to be sealed, how does it enter, can I do that, or is that me, is it me, I am sensitive the wind a knot of it has pushed me too hard, I am hurt, pushed into you, where I belong, I am keeping a secret, I am not speaking, I am hurting, I am stoned, I'm a bubble, I am seen, so many winds, some of them in knots, such sinking motion, always sinking, in my mind, I'm high, now that I'm sure you're near, how sure can I be how near you are, you are excited, I can feel it, it's not like the wind, do you know as much as me, when are you born, when you are coming, what a map for the streets of cities I could design. What I could show you, meet me, I'll show you my instinct to show you is still, a desire: you are mine and I know your insides I know you better than myself, been inside you, I've survived it even though I would've died for surviving it, given up easily, so you could go on, your presence reminds me, the wind that blows between us close, you make my love, first thing I feel & am sinking sinking soon too soon I want you back blank. I have you. You emerge, vision, tones of brown in warm rounds, a sucking person, like me. The same sex the same motion perceive the kiss as my identity with you. I am on you. What a look you finally give me, in secret, what a tone, in silence, silence your mere presence stretches out like long form in not quite golden light. I have a message for you. I am ugly, compared to you. I am not quite distorted in the center of your star, I am proud, you spring back, you are resilient, know me. You are brown, I am on you. The sun seems to take care of us, we're warm. It's rude.

V/E-Day, 1945

The nuns make us sign a waiver if they miff it or miff it or if it's a variation of baby, they will not assume the cost the expenses, you got me to the hospital but I wouldn't lie down, I stood there in the doorway signing handwritten waivers handed to me by nuns who were dirty, then I split for a ride in t's car, top down, slot of junk on the dash, my belly's distended but I'm still small, there's lots of room in my jeans from the side as I measure at least three widths of me could fit in easily to the belly of one carrying mother, her eyes, a glance, why are her pupils so small in this dim light, why is her eye like a flower, why isn't she sleeping, why isn't she awake, it would be easy. Dull browns & filthy blacks to the bright & hell color of t's sports car lucid slide shades lined in thin black, a whole drug a whole pot of tea's my last outpost before I give in completely to this design. Open it, it's closed. And You, I'll tell you what I think about you, great dreams-for-you-monster, I think I am saving you, I don't mean rescue or preserve if you knew you'd know that I'm only an intermediate swimmer, but saving, a laying by or laying up or maybe I'm hoarding you, no I'm not, I'm treating you carefully, no I'm not cause we play every day, sink ships, blow them up they've added a strip of canvas to my sails to catch the wind. The tie-in isn't quite perfect yet my overalls are still falling down, my pinafore's too small to catch all the money it rains, I'm sinking the bank's upside down, leave it, I'm coasting to safe, I'm bound to get somewhere strapped in this chair, give me a push, the ocean's electric, let me out, leave me alone, my head is buzzing & I've bitten, all the plants, they can't help but be influenced by me. Sea cow harbor seal butted to shore in the shape of a feather that writes. I've got sea legs & sea room, feathers in the seas on for taking risks. So I'm drinking the sea I came out of, back with the ones who eat

their own hands. I want to make it bright & brighter so a light can fall through. He stirs on the bed. The chair moves an arm. People see through. The plant stands. Electric burns right electric burns left in a circle. Knee. He turns over. Blue in relief. I am as far into the wall. Suck on the screen. The frame blows. Window walks on all fours. He walks out. Sneezes. The bats of Sumatra, dreams of the Malaysians. He picks up his bow & arrow but will not shoot. A method for shooting the helpless by intuition. Helpless in ice, helpless in winter, water & so on. Out of season. Unnatural. He's going for a giant piece of cake. All right. Door legs complain again cant walk the window walkd around. There's room. I didnt go with him. O.K. Will he come back. Is he hungry for cake, what a lion is, the door speaks in another vein. Alone. Spills it. I havent made my entry yet, the telltales are blowing for rain. Back of leaves are showing I'm hungry too, I move one more two more three more minutes are hours show your cards he says to me I've only got aces & even those I keep concealed, what hard work it is, sooner everyones noticed the aces are missing, no aces left in the deck or even was one. I tighten up. I've bet moderately. I'll fold. Everyone suspicious. I dont mind another hand. They deal me the aces again all five. I could really sweep up. I dont have to, door walks over to me & smiles. There's been an emergency you must race over in your car & cannibalize the surroundings then people are poorer they will be purer if you eat. The biggest details go first I swallow them whole. Look I'm not trying to make a mystery of it, I just want to go on. It seems to go on forever it could, a man with padding between me & him picks me up as a baby & sucks me right in. You ate the toys you should've left them, little bows & trumpets, cords & all brass plumbing play sets hugging the mid-winter frozen late summers mud pies. I feel so lazy I feel so tossed. Eat them go ahead. Eat the splinters too

they're succulent. And they wont enter into the bloodstream dont worry.  
Eat the snapping turtle in the yard & the bachelor buttons growing. Knows  
a bachelor. He lives upstairs, he's my mothers kid brother he likes to eat  
the wash line with me tied in knots. Eat the fence & their lilac trees  
swallow the thorns whole. Thorns of uncle's special rose bushes whole  
special sprays may poison you. Swallow the uncle he's scared, he poses for a  
picture fists tightly closed fists made tight. It was more than a first fist  
fight, you've been missing us. Swallow the feathers I'm made of raw kernels  
of corn. The strawberries get flooded growing low, the ditch goes to China,  
the whole yard never ends, it has no edges, I'm squatting down, I'm floating  
in the snow as tall as you. I havent sent the memo yet it's stiff I'm near to  
the end I'm taller than you the confusion is dreamlike the boys are on their  
boys bikes I wish I knew. Memo: there are phantoms & ghosts at the door.  
You scared? Memo: You open the door, there's a lion and a savage. You  
scared? Memo: you open the door there's a lobster, scared? Door opens,  
there's nothing there, then the bell rings, are you scared yet? The shadow  
of my hand is blue does that scare you, you take your first step do you  
remember being scared, where are you falling endlessly into, a man is a woman,  
women are men, arent you scared yet? I'm not me I'm someone else, are you  
scared, it's too dark to tell & I'm making faces faces of an attack on your  
bed, on your person, I'm not me, I'm someone else, there's a hole in the wall  
goes into eternity, the faucets & drains are connected for millions of miles,  
there are alligators living in the sewers, spiders fall from the ceiling into  
your bed, there's a poisonous snake caught in the drain pipe, his head peeps  
up, there's someone laughing under the bed, his hand grabs your leg, there's  
a thousand-legged on you, there's a man, two men, in the cellar, you cant get  
to the light in time, you step on a beetle, there's a face at the window the

devil's face, he's coming in, you must walk through the cellar in the dark, your bed is grabbing at you, erupting, a hand reaches up, you may fall out the window, the doorknobs fall off, you get a shock, you go out you come back, someone's missing, he cant be found, you never see him. You are forced into something, you want to hide. Snap & sudden the screen memory of a calendar with photographs & dates like memory from a really old tree. Like Sherlock Holmes we feel like cats & are wide awake, smoke some strong tobacco. Like we get used to this feeling of never sleeping we might get on top of things soon & now with the pointer I point to the times which are screens when I was somewhat free. There was & is that time I was walking down the street free & someone stopped me, we slipped on our black rubbers & beat each other with the hose like the wet newspapers of the war, what a picture, there's hardly any room here to maneuver myself inside this tiny frame. I want to be in a position to enjoy this victimization. I want to be in a position for straight play in this narrow time. The legs of the picture go walking the streets. You turn over & love or lower the t.v. I point to another date on the chart, another picture. Design money design what design it is. It's just a question of analysis this screen says to me, we want to get somewhere, we fight the amount of time that's past, we want to work which is why I'd like to scare you, which is why you frighten me, which is why my knife drills into you, which is why bears & lions are at the door, which is why rivers listen, which is why everything slows, becomes hazy is clouded, why is why I faint & lighter blue which is why the walls have eyes the walls have ears merely to listen to something, is haunting a spare that's not spoken of, edge on the pattern one mere point in the silly rearrangement of my removal from time & philosophy. I think it, down the street & free. Torture of it rare red steaks of ice cold mean slab stones of my sawdust country. I ate that & something

else. I'm trying to get to it in between here & there she was given a little boy's muscles & tried to make them work. They work fine but dont grow. No definition but a strong resilience & soft to touch. Something moving. I'm trying to get away with it. She had a red dot on her arm a little too soft & cool pushing in. His presence made things alive. I begged her to get married again but she wouldnt. They were protecting us against rape. I had a new sister. My real sister ceased to exist. Her friends wrestled. I read at the yellow kitchen table in bright fluorescent light with the telephone til three a.m. Every morning slept four hours & went to school. Slept on the trains. Worked till six, took naps & ate veal & seven sandwiches a day. No dates but the red cross & one I attacked like a stone on the stoop. And Peter who loved me folk music & got jealous of Bob who I secretly hated. A messenger. I cut my hair. Her wounds were fierce purple lions in the lime light room. She called the police. I agreed it was a stranger but were we helpless as that? She screamed in her sleep. She wept, she asked me questions she didnt live she asked me to be alone with her I expected a miracle it was a secret I washed her hair & skinny back I read all books in a chair facing the round windows & when Father O. came I watched for him I was ready with a candle & a hat to answer the door. O was the one I pleaded to for sex much later. Am I allowed to kiss him on his birthday? & who was the one who used to take you out in taxis? & where is your diary written in stenography & my father's love poems to you? You wink at me. Dont bring her here, she wont understand. Morphine. She wont understand morphine. & something black, maybe the disease, your mouth is open. I kill my aunts at your funeral & put on your clothes. You were one of the survivors like they say in the papers, now you've made me a hero. They send me to the red cross to have an affair with a man. I have one with a man who cant pronounce it. I wish to drop him



dead so I leave him at the gate & realize you're not with me. I redelegate all authority & power over me to myself. I become my own curtain. I become my own design. Except for uncle who I try to scare tear into being my lover as he suggested. But he has no passion. He's just a room in the house upstairs. I go up there. He's militant & orderly. He makes me move in with him, he tells me who I dont love. He is forbidding me. He meets me at the movies in Manhattan, Ben Hur. He takes my arm & we eat sandwiches at Toffenetti's where he goes on his dates with M. who is a woman who owns her own house. Across the street. M., I watch her blinds. He used to love a woman whose name was the same as his mothers but she died & his mother died & beautiful jealous Ted & Marie died & then he died but first he stood at the foot of my bed with his laundry & asked me what were my plans & how long did I expect to sleep. I set up a place to fuck in the basement but we didnt use it. Grandfather moaned all night in the bed through the wall. I moved mine over. I wondered about his prick, never fucking & his magazines they were all in order. He wrote me letters about money & promised me his desk. He had beautiful hands & wrists & blue eyes. He was milking me, he sent me to college, he felt me out, I fainted for him, he announced me but where could we go? He said I didnt love him. It was while I was ironing. He was right. I stopped coming home. I couldnt understand how one hour of the day was more sexual than another. We eat out on Sundays & take long walks. He visits the cemetery he takes me with him. It makes no sense, he is alive, he fights with his father, he loves the giants, I meddle with him, he pays me money for being so smart, we make bets with each other. He brings blouses from Manhattan & beautiful bolts of cloth. He astonishes me. Leather gloves come next. We talk about teste. My fathers flannel shirts, gray suits with pink shirts & black & pink ties. I want a pink & purple convertible, I have a

sky blue pink dress & one red velvet with a white lace collar. To imitate him I dress in pink & gray. He imitates me. We go to City Hall & the Botanical Gardens. I'm in a flower dress. I love my jeans but it's Sunday. I love to pack my bags for vacation. Turquoise shorts, I'm in the back seat, I yell "stop," & he does, it's lemon ice. On my mother's birthday I refuse to get out of the car, I am sick. We play horseshoes. I'm as good as he is. With uncle I play catch. I watch him work with wood. I do the sandpapering & hand him tools. We work in the garden growing corn. I get hot. We order the seeds. Tea roses, fir tree, hydrangea bushes, bachelor buttons, our part of the garden. Look how far I've gotten.

June 27, 1958

FREUD, FREUND, FRIEND, FREEZING, FJORD, FEUD, FEND for yourself, FRIGID, J'ai froix, j'aime les fraises and roses too, Rosemary, sea dew: and you are King Lear, oh no. Cordelia is, I cant say it. And Goneril & Regan's venereal disease, and Edgar & Edmund are always for short, that is, he pretends to be a madman & saves the day. Did I know all this? I know more than this. You are each message in the water I drink. Tomorrow will be a hard day cause the kingdom is a cause made up of families collapse & who is the subject of the king? Dear Lear Goliath, how many are you & am I any to fit into you, there's no mother there. SHAKES BEAR, & shapes bear. Shakes beer - it explodes, the mine field, the juices. Someone once told me that frozen juices explode if you let them get warm, & I said, "Everything anticipates as much as it's past." And I imagine myself in a loft with the ceiling beams exposed & many plants hanging from them with a purple light to keep them grow & someone leaves, I am alone, I am all one & you are free to visit me whenever you please, as a matter of fact I give you the key, we are

so serious we play & the walls of the room are brown wood, all exposed, as the beams & the arrangement, books, papers, all ramshackle, random & you come by alot to this one large room, you enter in just anytime, it's always a great pleasure to see you & we are each other's by the arrangement of the room which pleases you & I take pleasure in that it's warm, yellow, the brown, the exposed wood reminds me of your face, it is your face & the plant light, purple, is your eyes mixed with the red of the cloth you attract me with when we play we perform the art of bullfighting which is hard to say but it's what we do. Now at least. But then & this is later in my ceiling-beam room we no longer perform & the arrangement is just a reflection of the fantasy I dream to reform desire in a room that could exist, you could walk into it, then now cause I saw those colors & someone did live there, so sure I could & I'd like to trail off.... Where I was then you were there, I know it, nostalgia for a drift & that room, you walk in, shit man that's as real as anything & as anything I cant stand, it already exists, the room is mine & your life would be yours to be left alone, funny's the right word, I wouldnt disturb it, the veil of the room reveals all, I'm charmed perhaps by my final, I know it's not last, create without limits, something, but a twig, small twig, it's limits shit dont they branch out? I'm lost again here but that was my vision & visions by nature go on for forever's too long as now I ache. This is different from the other which comes before, as every last will & testament cancels out the all previous disposals of whatever pennies & properties you or your poppa are in charge of at large at the time of the reading of the will, no death is even, none is even necessary. So, why do you have to go away this weekend? With full knowledge of how storms brew. I take this fearful beginning of dispersal, you call it a fragment, you private person. I take it & hopes to be with you. I am penitent, penetrate,

as Ovid must be woman to be simple. It is easy the way things are. Change  
& magic are the same. I have a name it stalls me from wishes, to be your  
mere daughter. She's as everything as me & I am no more. I'd like to be  
there. Lovers seem to be absent, so tell me. Please indict me before my  
release from a painful imprisonment that's cost me my age of a thousand years  
& made me wish I could see through the giant mass of the earth as I am. And  
tell me Can I? A MAZE. Goddam you & me, never before.

9/16/74

Thoughts make men strangers  
and create great moments of urgency,  
as well as nervousness, when a thought  
moves you to wake up and light a cigarette  
and lie back on pillow, content  
in thinking, in playing the thought through,  
that's the only way for it to die!

The death of a thought isn't wholesome  
like coming home from school for a glass of milk  
and cookies. There's no wholesomeness  
in guilt, but it comes in dreams  
in the form of pictures  
of saints and rabbinical figures  
lighting big cigars.

There's no thought like the one I'm having.  
It bends me backwards in my chair so that  
I tip over and break a few vertebrae.  
Thoughts come in harsh colors, in voices  
that link you with mechanical impulses. Bad  
thoughts about people you loved but who betrayed  
you mean you still love them,

and if you lie to yourself in thoughts  
and think that hate is simply the bent of human nature  
the people you think of will strike back  
with conviction and ire  
like names printed in black letters  
across the front of a tabloid.

More power to you, now that your thoughts are known,  
not weighed and pocketed like enzymes  
racing through your system,  
a thought of heartbreak on a summer night  
of revenge, bile swallowed and spat out across  
your neighbor's fence.

What does it matter if you die without thinking,  
but with a clear mind proceed into your new life,  
no thoughts of the future, your destiny's  
a shambles, of the past  
a crowd of animals passing up a ramp  
onto an ark floating out to sea  
like a man speaking his own defense,  
what's in a death but your thoughts while dying?

What's in your heart  
but someone thinking? Your intelligence

nestled in a breast? A thought can be positive  
or negative, but the best are serene,  
that advocate no stance, tolerate only the moment,  
and flow to the source, unconcerned, like a caress.

\*

#### GOODBYE TO ALL THAT

Each does a little  
more than what  
he does best, but trusts  
his genius, hers  
shines through nonetheless

& if it hurts the eyes  
to wade across the tansured  
head, a metaphor  
for poetry  
barren of truthfulness

then close the book  
turn off the light, &  
seek the member of the  
species with whom  
you've been blessed

to spend these moments  
together, reading in bed

### ON READING (3)

My first favorite books were a series of baseball stories by John R. Tunis. Each book focused on a different member of an imaginary version of The Brooklyn Dodgers, including the manager--who was also the shortstop, the catcher--who was Jewish, the right-fielder, nicknamed Highpockets, and the center-fielder, The Kid From Tompkinsville, who missed 2 years of his playing career to go into the service, just like Ted Williams. Before that I'd read all The Hardy Boy books, exchanging them as gifts when my friend's birthdays rolled around, though once Paul--my closest friend--looked at the cover of the book I'd just given him and seeing The Hardy Boys perched on a mountain somewhere returned the book to me saying he didn't like westerns. I was appalled, both by his ignorance (the book wasn't a western) and his honesty (weren't you supposed to be delighted at any gift--no matter what?) It occurred to me that you could copy a book, word for word, and then sign your name to it, and it would be yours. Copying was more fun than making anything up, especially if you were involved with your own handwriting, and could write endlessly just to see the way the words came out. My first writing involved filling up 10¢ notebooks as quickly as possible. The main purpose was just to do it, and afterwards pat myself on the back for having done so much. At about the same time I began writing play-by-play descriptions of baseball games in the style used by The Daily News to report games played too late the night before to cover in a normal article. These reports were minimal: "Gillian flied out to Irvin in left. Reese walked on four pitches, Snider singled to right, Reese stopping at second." And that's what my stories were like. I'd take two teams and write out the entire game, keeping the score close to keep myself interested, and investing the game with the



weight of it being the first game of The World Series or the deciding game of an also imaginary pennant race. I was an early reader, apparently, but also had alot of eye trouble when I was young (in fact, the doctors suggested an operation, but my parents chose not to). At the library I burst into tears because the librarians wouldn't let me take books out of the "adult" section, I was still underage, and they selected a book from the adult shelves, to test me, on the spot. I read out loud to everyone in the library so they could see I read well enough to take books from the adult section, and every 2 weeks I took out 6 books, but read maybe only 1 or 2, until after awhile I became worried that there were no books left of interest beyond the Tunis books, all of which (except for his biography of Lincoln) I'd read. Science fiction was a possibility, and I read all of Bradbury, Simak, Pohl, Kornbluth, Heinlein, Anderson, Asimov, Robert Sheckley, Lester del Rey, and endless others, until one afternoon, sitting on my bed with my back against the wall and the book up in the air in front of me, I realized that I wasn't really reading at all, I was just turning the pages, and that my mind was somewhere else entirely. Maybe, it struck me at first, I'd discovered a new method of reading, where every word or every few lines you went back into your own head, but continued, nonetheless, to pretend you were reading, going through the motions, while your mind supplied the real story. Some books, on the other hand, held my attention throughout, and I knew I needed some sort of inner voice to instruct me to stop reading if I wasn't really reading. That voice appeared and told me if all I wanted to do was daydream it wasn't necessary to hide behind a book, and taking its advice I'd lie stretched out on my bed, for hours, tossing a turquoise ring I bought in New Mexico into the air, catching it, as my thoughts trailed off elsewhere. When I did find a book I liked I read it several times; among those that left their mark is a novel

called The Saturdays, about a family of 4 or 5 children who chip in their allowances so they each can do whatever they please, separately and in turn, on Saturday! After each member of the family took his or her turn I lost interest, and though there were about 100 more pages in the book, I was satisfied to reread the first few chapters. Another book which caught my eye was called Hot Rod and I remember reading in the Junior High School library until something incredibly confusing took place in the story and going back over the chapters to find out just what was going on I discovered 40 or so pages had been ripped out of the middle of the book. The good parts, probably. One day I found a book on my sister's shelf, a paperback for which she'd made a special book-jacket out of brown wrapping paper. Written in ink on the outside was the title, "Little Women," nothing to really tempt my curiosity, until, thumbing through it at a later date I realized the reason for the phony cover when I saw that the book wasn't "Little Women" at all, but a novel by a man named Harry Grey, The Hoods. Written in the first person, The Hoods traced the lives of Noodles (the narrator), Big Maxie, Cockeye and Patsy, from their childhood as a group of small-time hustlers on Delancy Street in the 1920s to their eventual success as a wing of a Mafioso-type syndicate. Certain scenes stand out: Noodles love for Dolores, a neighborhood girl, who innocently dances for the gang in the back of the candystore where they hang out, and who Noodles later tries to rape--they're much older, now--in the back seat of a taxi; Fanny, another neighborhood girl, who let the members of the gang "feel her up" if they bought her a charlotte russe; and the phenomenal ending in which Noodles deserts the rest of the gang, his life-long friends, in fact squeals on them on the eve of a foolish attempt to stick up The Federal Reserve, and escapes to the country, where, sitting on the bank of The Hudson eating a

tin of sardines, a Hershey bar and a quart of milk, he contemplates the future and the amazing book he's going to write.

My sister had the habit of folding over and marking with lipstick the pages of those books which contained "the good parts," and that saved me a lot of trouble going through hideous works like Battle Cry in search of the sexy passages. A Stone For Danny Fisher was the only Harold Robbins book I ever read; again, the main character was someone I could almost identify with, an important criteria for holding my interest. Another enormous favorite was The Amboy Dukes in which the hero leaps from the roof of his building (he just killed his high school teacher and the cops are after him) and in the book's final sentence caroms off the fire escape to the streets below. Occasionally my father brought home a mystery story with a (for those days) provocative cover and when I was home alone I'd thumb through it, attentive only to the moment when the straps of the girl's dress slipped from around her shoulders revealing two white globes of flesh to which the hero passionately pressed his lips....

WILLIAM CORBETT

Drunkenness 1

"Waste is strength"

Octavio Paz

Drunkenness and the street lights  
spots on the walls  
dim lights wavering up the stairs.  
Several napkins crumpled  
smeared with Chinese port sauce  
but that was earlier  
along the gutter  
sickly yellow-green  
ailanthus leaves fallen.  
Lovely those people  
who make no demands  
not friend nor family  
after all I never bicycled  
through France in my late twenties  
so never knew that sweet anticipation  
of a life to come.

Drunkenness 2

Drunkenness or doing what you're not supposed to  
or not doing what you're supposed to.

Short of breath and sweaty.

Dense. A brain like glass nothing sticks  
a mind's eye like glass

what I can't figure

the faint breath there

something passing or just passed.

In the morning no cigarette smoke inhaled

over toothpaste.

What full head What empty stomach What spotted hands.

Drunkenness 3

What do you concentrate on  
and who do you know?  
Driving mother's blue Buick  
over a country dirt road  
the girl's huge tits, your ardor  
enough to just about weep  
and escape or college friendship  
dull, secure, to sleep.  
You did find your way home  
one late summer afternoon  
the shadows of the green leaves  
their washing sound  
exquisite tender sentiment  
neither here nor there.  
No putting out the fire  
with water pure as the rain  
nor petals nor ginger ale.

Drunkenness 4

My reflection in the clouds  
Chinese drunken poets desire.  
No clouds today  
a sky as clear as gin  
to swim or drown in  
the river takes this bend  
goes where air and water  
don't meet as friends.

Drunkenness 5

Join the Oneida Colony

where men are men

and none have orgasms to prove it.



Drunkenness 6

Pretty girls bore men  
who drink all morning.

If that beautiful thing  
doesn't stop staring at me  
I'll have to plug her  
with my heat seeking machine.

They love the things men do alone-  
baseball or standing up to piss.

Never joined the Elks Club  
no tooth on no watch chain.

Drunkenness 7 Weird Shit

This is a richly appointed headache  
and in my dream  
the gun shoots water  
I escape by swinging  
from a low branch  
onto a moving truck  
before I am caught empty handed.

Earlier in America  
it got so cold  
we drove west  
the far west  
the car's tires  
stuck to the road.  
As a gunman  
you menaced shopgirls  
your rat-sleek hair  
your flashing glasses  
small, dirty teeth  
the girls adored.  
You liked the way  
they walked with arms folded  
in the cold going for coffee.  
You were asshole buddies  
anticipating a life to come,  
Sweet life.

Drunkennes 9

Clattering deer  
in the alley  
slaughtered for dinner.  
Lowry's Mexican chocolate skulls  
aged white crushed to smithereens.  
The other one broke his neck  
in a wrestler's bridge.

JAMES TATE

BRING THEM BACK ALIVE

I always expected to meet my father on the street, probably downtown, because I imagined him wandering lost in a daze for years across Europe, through Africa, up South America, across the States, and finally some day standing at a streetlight down at 10th and Magee wondering which way to go now. I knew we would stop and stare at one another, drawn by some deep instinct that was a father and his boy, no matter he'd only seen a picture of me one month old, and I a bunch of worn photographs of him taken before my lifetime. I knew he would be changed; the war and the years of wandering would have stolen his handsome youth. I was ready for that. I had aged him in my mind many times preparing for the fated reunion.

For all the continuing adoration in our household, I knew almost nothing about him. I have no idea what his interests were: only that he was kind, gentle, strong. I don't know if he had any time for college or work between graduation from Paseo High School and enlistment in the Air Force. I knew he was Number 1 in his Flight School Class and achieved the rank of Captain while pilot of a B-17 in the Eighth Air Force flying out of England. He was up for leave when the crush was on with the bombing of Germany. They extended the number of combat missions just as my father was preparing to come home for Easter and see his beloved wife and newborn son. That's when he was shot down, the next flight.

We were living with my Grandma and Grandpa Whitsitt. Grandpa Whitsitt worked for the Federal Reserve Bank longer than any man in their

national history. He was a very mild, level-headed man who refused to go to church with the rest of the family. One night he sat up from his sleep and said to my grandmother, "Vincent has just been shot down over Germany!" He woke the whole family and told them. Then he sat up alone the rest of the night and waited for the telegram.

They never found him. The rest of the crew was accounted for. Some were wounded. Some were dead. And some were in prison-camps. Roy Weaver, my father's best friend and co-pilot, was in a prison-camp. His wife Mildred was my mother's best friend. They had even been photographed together several times by the Kansas City Star as two typical heroic and beautiful young war brides. Mildred had a daughter born about the same time as me named Billy.

My mother waited every day for information. Nothing came. Sometimes another telegram assuring her that they were looking everywhere; or perhaps he had now passed from one statis to another more grave (We never understood or accepted these.) There were constant phonecalls to wives or to servicemen home on furlough.

And then the war was over. No one in our house knew how to celebrate the great victory for which everyone at home had pulled so selflessly. We didn't feel like we had won. But you had to act happy for those whose beloved men did come back in one piece or pretty near.

Roy Weaver made it back without a scratch. He seemed okay at first. My mother waited restlessly for the right moment to ask him about Vincent. Why didn't Roy bring it up. The need was so obvious as to baffle my mother at his awkward reticence. We visited the Weavers three or four times the first month he was back. Mildred seemed to accept the situation and didn't know what to say to my mother.

At her wit's end one day my mother finally broke the idle chat and said, "What happened to Vincent, Roy?"

Roy moved the coffee cup away from his mouth and onto the saucer and said swallowing, "Well, the plane was hit. It was hit bad. Half a wing was on fire. Nobody was hurt but we were going down. I said to Vincent, 'Let's ditch it.' He said to go on, he was going to hold it until we were gone and then follow. And that was it. I never saw him again. Mickey Spoletto, our gunner was shot while he was coming down. Mark Janowicz was sent to a camp in Italy and got shot trying to escape. Hal Ober, the navigator, was with me in camp."

He avoided looking my mother in the eyes. He took another gulp of coffee, leaned back and said, rather distantly: "I always asked everyone new when they came in the camp if they had heard any news about Vincent."

We waited for him to go on. But he didn't. He sank into himself. Several minutes passed in silence when all present floated in their own rich war melancholy. Only now after so much singing was it beginning to seem real.

"What did they say?" asked my mother.

"Nothing," he said. "Never a word. They never even found the plane..."

Mildred Weaver called my mother two weeks later and said that Roy had disappeared. He had gone out for a paper five days before and had not returned. My mother and I went over immediately and I played with Billy while Mildred rang her hands and cried on my mother's shoulder, saying that he had been acting strange ever since he had gotten back. And that it had been getting worse. We spent a lot of time with Mildred and Billy over the next three weeks until the police called one day and said they had found

him. He had written two-thousand dollars worth of bad checks all across the Midwest and West. He was in jail in Seattle and it wasn't until someone finally thought to have him examined by a psychiatrist that they realized he was a victim of total amnesia. He knew not his name, his address, nor a single fact of his life.

They sent him back to Kansas City where he was put in therapy at the State hospital for several months, and then continued on as an out-patient after that for some time. He got a job at the Chevrolet plant and Mildred seemed to be her self again. We all went on picnics together to Swope Park or Fairyland.

Sometimes at home my mother would stop what she was doing, ironing or making cookies, and take my hand. We would walk out on the front porch and sit down on the swing. "This is the day your father and I were married," she would say. Or, "This is your father's birthday." Or, "This is the day your father was shot down, three years ago today Jimmy. You would have loved him. He was so . . . kind. So handsome! Everybody loved Vincent."

And it was true, everybody did love Vincent. Everyone in my mother's family worshipped him and his loss was an enduring pain to them. His name was spoken so often at the dinner table it sometimes seemed to me who had never met him that he had just left the room. Nobody could believe he was dead.

Roy Weaver knew my mother didn't believe him. The friendship was strained because of this. There seemed to be a terrible struggle going on inside of Roy one day when we dropped by to see Mildred and Billy. We were surprised to find Roy home from work. He shrugged off the inquiry my mother made by saying, "Oh, I thought I felt a cold coming on." Mildred was in the next room taking her hair down. We sat down with him. He stood up and started pacing in front of us with his eyes straight ahead at the wall.



"You know, Betty," he said, "Vincent almost made it."

"What are you talking about Roy. . ."

"You see, I helped Vincent escape the first night after they had registered us and stripped us at the camp. I was to start a ruckus with the guard and draw all the attention, risk getting shot right there on the spot. Then Vincent could make a break for it. I would probably get shot anyway when they made the connection that I had rigged it. As much as I loved my own wife and Billy whom I hadn't seen yet, I would have laid down my life to put Vincent back safely in your arms with little Jimmy. I tried, Betty, honest I did. I called that guard every name in the book. The guard came toward me alright; the trouble was, instead of engaging in any kind of fight with me he just slammed me a good one with the butt of his rifle in the back of the head, here, just at the top of the neck. I went out cold. I remember trying to fight my way back to consciousness: I kept thinking, I've got to save Vincent, I can't just lay here like this, I've got to pull myself up and save Vincent!"

"When I came to, I had the sensation that I had just closed my eyes for a second. I was in my cot in the sleeping room. Everybody was asleep. I couldn't believe it. Had the whole incident been a dream. I looked over at Vincent's cot and somebody was in it. At first I thought it was Vincent, but this guy was bigger. I leaned over to Hal Ober who was sleeping beside me and said, "Where's Vincent?" Hal looked at me and said, 'He made it.' I was so happy I felt like screaming, 'Did you hear that boys, Vincent made it!'

"He made it?" my mother asked incredulously.

"That's what I thought all that night. I didn't even mind my throbbing headache; I thought I had helped Vincent escape that nightmare. The next

day out in the yard the guard who had hit me in the head the night before swaggered up to me and said: 'Your friend the Captain almost made it, too bad.' Apparently our temporary camp was within a few miles of Allied-held territory and Vincent was shot by a sniper within yards of freedom.

My mother sobbed into her handkerchief. Mildred came into the room and could guess what they were talking about. My mother tried to pull herself together.

"Well then why wasn't his body found. . . " she couldn't finish.

Roy suddenly seemed elsewhere. "I don't know," he said. "I don't know. That's a good question."

Roy disappeared again after that. It was the same story. Wandering here and there aimlessly, a string of bad checks through Illinois and Ohio, finally catching up with him in Albany, no idea who he was. We had to take care of Mildred and Billy during these times. Mildred herself always seemed close to a break-down, her nerves were in shreds. She couldn't talk about the war. "Let's talk about something else, what do you say?" she would say anxiously to my mother if my mother happened to mention anything to do with it. That didn't leave too much to talk about, since both of their lives had been so thoroughly changed by it, by what had happened to their husbands.

Billy, with whom I silently played in the next room, didn't know where her father went when he was away for so long. My mother told me. I had some thoughts about Billy's father, Roy. I thought he probably forgot everything and went crazy because he knew where my father was or what had happened to him, and for some reason he couldn't tell us, and that was driving him crazy and making him forget who he was. I knew he must be suffering but I thought it was cruel of him to not tell us the truth. My mother and I secretly feared that he wasn't telling us the truth because the truth was too awful.

After he had been brought back again and gone to the hospital for a while again and once again had a job and seemed to be acting like a normal person, a good husband and father, we started seeing them again. It always took us a little while to get back to visiting them right after Roy came back, because we knew it must be hard for them. Mildred was very nervous. Billy was getting old enough to see that her father changed a good deal. They could tell when he was going to go off, but they didn't know how to stop him, were afraid to try.

I spent a lot of time now going through boxes of old photographs of my mother and father as young lovers in highschool, Vincent in a baggy grey-flannel suit and a white shirt open at the neck, his arm around my mother. They appeared to be very happy, very much in love. Then there were worried tender photographs of train partings, my mother and his mother kissing him on each cheek for the picture Mr. Appleby was taking, shaking on his wooden leg. Then many handsome photographs of Vincent in Flight School, standing proud with his classmates; and later his flight crew, they looking at him with personal pride and respect. Vincent working late at night in his office on the base, serious paperwork, his leather jacket on, his hat, looking up. My mother had an album the service had given her, and she filled it with clippings and mementos: napkins from dances at the base when he was stationed in Oklahoma at first and my mother lived there with him, just pregnant with me. Anything pertaining to their lives, even a grim list of his classmates on which she had written in small script the fate of each young man--dead, prisoncamp in Italy, prisoncamp in Germany, wounded, home safe. Out of helplessness more than bitterness she was comparing her fate to others. Was she the only one whose husband was lost. . .just not found. Had the War-Machine cranked-down, disassembled itself and transformed the demons of death into babyfood and fast cars without uncovering a trace of Captain

Samuel Vincent Appleby or his B-177? Had they been just swallowed up by the heavens; had the friction between death and desire erased him?

There were the love letters too, including excited fathering remarks about little Jimmy, and how Easter was coming soon and he would be home at last. I tried to imagine his voice as I read these. When I stared at the pictures and read the letters at the same time I could see his mouth move. And I was confident he would find us, no matter if he was like Roy and had forgotten his name, had forgotten where we lived. He would stumble on and when he found us then it would all come back to him and we would tell him how long we had waited for this day.

The older I got the more I was convinced Roy Weaver had the secret of my father's disappearance. By the time I was six I was determined to get it out of him myself. My mother had given up hope of ever getting Roy to talk sense. It wasn't fair to question him anyway, because he was crazy and suffered terribly himself. We didn't see them so much now. They had moved to another house and it was on the other side of town. The parents made plans to get Billy and I together because we still thought of each other as friends.

I didn't know how to act around Roy. If I forgot he was sometimes crazy then he did something to remind me and I was embarrassed. And I didn't think it was nice to treat him as if he were crazy, even if I had known how to treat a crazy person. And besides, you didn't notice it most of the time. He didn't seem very crazy, just unnatural in the way he would look at me sometimes, as if (I thought always) he wanted to say something.

One time he was looking at me so intensely and yet not saying anything that I finally broke the silence and said with uncharacteristic bravery, "Go on, what were you going to say?" He shook his head and said, "Oh I was just thinking how proud your father would be of you. You look quite

a lot like him you know."

"I might not now," I said enigmatically.

"What do you mean by that Jimmy?" he asked.

"I mean he might look much different now, he would be older."

"Yes." We sat there in silence for a few moments and then he said to me, "Do you think about him much Jimmy?"

"Yes," I said.

"What do you think?"

"I think I'll meet him downtown some day," I said.

My mother and Mildred came back from shopping and it was time for us to go home. That was the most I had ever talked to Roy. I was more convinced than ever that he was hiding something from us. I told my mother on the way home. I said, "Why don't you just make him tell you the truth? Can't you force him?" She said she couldn't because Roy was sick and wasn't responsible for what he said.

Roy called that night and said he was going to tell her the truth. The truth was awful and he had wanted to hide it from her. Vincent had made him promise that he would never tell. The truth was, he said, that Vincent had lost both arms and legs and was taken care of by an old farm woman some place in France, he didn't remember where.

We didn't see the Weavers after that. A few years later they moved to Texas. Every now and then my mother would say, "Remember Mildred Weaver?" And I would say yes. "They say he's just as bad, poor Roy."

CLARK COOLIDGE

From IN VIRGINIA

for Paul Metcalf

White rocks apparently have never been entered.

Rocks dropped in White Rocks Deep Pit return no sound. Mr. Taylor once descended but could see no signs of a bottom, nor could Sonny Spinks see any bottom when he descended about the same distance.

Inquire at the house on the side of the road about Fry.

Long's is said to be fairly large with running water.

A Carroll boy lives near the underpass and knows the location of Oaks.

An old tub and two 50-gallon metal drums are still in Ely's Moonshine.

Hobb's Pit was at first thought to connect with Beatty's.

Seal Pit was not explored.

Near the rear of Speaks Chapel there is a dome which has a surface sink about it.

After a stoop at either end, one can walk upright in Sheep.

The Smiths used to carry water from a barrel just inside Smith.

It might be possible to go downstream in Sweet Potato.

Thompson is reported to be big.

Bowling goes off to the right but quickly circles left.

Crockett Spring is very cherty in places and appears unstable in the rear.

The Indian roof caved in in places and sewage may be dumped into it.

The Poorfarm rooms are separated by small house-size blocks.

Roop may be blocked by a slump.

The dry upper level of Cudjo's is generally known as Soldier's.

Ewing Saltpeter is one huge crater. You cross this on foot or by the seat of your pants, according to the state of your nerves and your tight-rope walking ability.

One boy said that he had been down into Dog Drop to rescue a dog.

Mr. Minor said that he had been putting dead animals in Dead Cow for a number of years.

McCurry's Indian is gained by climbing down a ladder.

Skull might be large.

Unthank has many "inviting" leads which were not explored.

Mt. Washington School is reported to be a pit which has been filled with rocks and debris.

Fisher was used as a shelter for the distillation of whiskey in past years.

Fred Bull's is a very small hole in the right bank of a large ravine near the house and is too small to warrant further mention.

Many flies, crickets, spiders, earthworms, mosquitoes, a millipede, a centipede, a salamander, tree roots, mold, and a small amount of bat guano were observed in Old Mill.

Slusser's Chapel is presumed to be the same as Fred Bull's.

Agnew's most interesting feature is the number of tree roots, some of them quite thick.

Mile Long probably since reported under another name.

Aunt Nellie's Hole slopes, with some simple passages extending.

Luster's Gate is near an old red barn on property of Mr. Charles Atkinson.

Thierry pinpoints Sawmill through a gate and across the stream twice just past a sawmill.

Granny Richards is well known.

Showalter's was dug about 1865 in search for minerals.

Atwood Barnyard has a ten foot drop.

Removals have been made from Keyser from time to time.

Woods must not be entered without permission.

At one time a turkey buzzard nested near the horizontal entrance making Gander's quite odoriferous.

It has never been definitely determined whether or not there are passages of any kind beyond Mike Long's tight fissure.

Hitt's is inhabited by swarms of mosquitoes as well as some centipedes.  
Comer could have been used as a shelter.

Zirkle's is covered, as far as is known, by a slab of concrete.

Ruffner's is also barred, with the door being on top of a concrete  
"Pill-box."

Earl Browder, waterfront communist, is supposed to have used Saltpeter  
as a hideout in 1917-18 to escape detection by the FBI.

Farmer cannot be identified on the County road map.

Bailey's contains nothing of any note.

A man-made stone wall is on the RR side of Welcome Inn.

Horse Skull is 370 ft. long, 25 ft. deep and 12 Little Brown bats  
were noted within.

Cox's Store is near Rich Hill School just NW of the transmission line.

Amos is near Boom Furnace.

Dragon's Tooth Shelter shows no solutional characteristics.

A stream of sticks, apples and potatoes flows thru Garman's during  
heavy rains.

Beyond the small "throat" in Francisco's rigging is necessary.

Dixie's table, shelf, or mirror pool is uniquely beautiful.

Hollins College can now be entered through a door in the basement  
of the girls dormitory. There are rumors to the effect that there  
is another entrance miles away.

We heard reports of a boat being carried in to be used on  
a lake in Blankenship.

Quite a bit of tobacco shed can be seen in Poor Mountain.

Bell's Valley Water may continue beyond as a current of air whistles.

Peters' is probably a myth, and might be the same myth as Pete's.

Pig Pen is reported to be near the word "Creek" of Kerr Creek.

Billy Williams' bottom contains loose pebbles and small concretions  
and is heavily coated with mud.

Murdering Creek narrows to a crack too small for a man to negotiate  
without the risk of getting stuck.



Bare Polecat Hollow is "said" to go further.

Bathers' is very wet and muddy with very little rise.

Daylight can be seen through the ceiling of Limekiln.

Ringbat Pothole descends in intervals with interesting signs of small animals.

Showalter's was filled with water on Feb. 10, 1957.

Several people have hunted for Turkey Hill Paradise but have not been successful.

Neriah Church is a group of caves.

Sewer is large enough for a man.

Lew Kibbee and party dug in Whose Hole but got nowhere.

Though three men searched in a fascinating and tantalizing 2 hr. hunt, no real opening was ever found in Tardy Rocks.

A thin film of mud is present everywhere in Marble.

Some local people supposedly once built a winch for descent of Bottomless Pit but lost their nerve before the bottom was reached.

Among other things the anguished cries of women were supposed to have been heard in the far depths of Buck Hill.

Doll House is small and easy to get around in.

Rope is necessary at Isabella's Stairsteps.

Natural Bridge was noted by Wm. Cuthrie in "A New System of Modern Geography", 1795.

Salt peter is reached by means of a rustic foot bridge.

Water 2 ft. deep extends through Windsor Mountain.

Jack Wootton dubbed the solution chimney of Brady's Hidden the "Brain Room".

There may or may not be a cave on the place known as the Effinger farm. Mrs. Moore said Mr. Moore would know.

A dog, later rescued, fell in while chasing a fox. Many turtles have also fallen into Thomas' Trap.

At the home of Andy Early, sometimes known as Andy Baldwin, in the colored section of Glasgow, Early was finally located.

Chance Dove soon pinches down to a belly crawl strewn with tiny stone marbles.

Orebaugh was found and then "lost" again on location trip.

Devil's Hole leads into some pockets having some very striking coloring.

Trash originally blocked Mad Steer, but a loud gurgling was heard beyond.

Swank's ground hog entrance ends in a mud plug.

Inside the entrance to 3-D Maze it is possible to go 4 ways.

Some of the Melrose formations were the object of considerable target practice during the Civil War by soldiers of both armies.

Big Mouth Smoke Hole stream may seep into Endless Caverns.

Stem Hole has a rocky entrance.

At the bottom of Cedar Hill is a huge erosion formation, nearly white and reminding one of the ghost ship in Crater Lake, Oregon.

Holsinger's may be on Endless property.

At times matches and carbide lamps went out at Jennings' lowest point. This did not occur in 1954.

Sugar Nut Hill was once beautiful but it is now dead.

After we had penetrated Wise, Earl C. Fogle lost interest in his purchase.

Mr. Long thinks Long's could be opened.

At one point Onyx Hill narrows down to a small keyhole.

A large circular room makes up much of Wheelbarger's.

Practice Hole leads quickly to a dead end.

By-Pass should not be re-entered even if still open.

Flook swings around in the shape of a rough scythe to the end.

Hanging Veil is almost pure white on one side, and very muddy on the other.

Kezle consists of a sponge work of anastomosing dip tubes.

Only during wet periods does water reach the end of Ann Miller's Deeds.

According to Mr. Flook a hole suddenly opened up on his hill ten years ago and has been covered by dead cedars ever since.

Sally Stephens' Big Mouth shows an impressive arch, and is one of a chain of sinks.

Once used, unsuccessfully, for drying apples, there are many wooden racks and bottles in Miller's.

Big A Mountain is of unknown extent.

There are many shattered formations in Hurt.

Jessie is presently used as a well pump shaft.

By moving some rocks at Big Spring while the stream is at low water some summer, it might be possible to get underground.

According to J.R. Sweet, a local boy was supposed to have fallen 60 feet in Gibson a few years ago.

Smith's Drop can be reached by following a shelf, but a ladder is better.

Nash Ford is reported near Nash Ford.

Arthur Monk's was not visited.

There is a local tale of an Indian chasing a white man into Gray's. The white man took the wet passage and escaped two miles away. The Indian took the dry passage and was killed by "gas".

Jimmy's Jump is shown to be in the top of a small hill, and is said to be near Elk Garden.

The natives used to go into Singing for a short distance for the sound effect.

Ouillen's Spring is first a duck-way and then a walk-way.

Banner's Corner Rock House is large and impressive and developed.

Glass Hole is filled with much broken glass at the bottom.

Johnson is large and has long been known to the local people.

Dorton School might be a large cave.

Local men said that Poker was once used for secret poker games.

Two small concrete basins, constructed by the local people, are used for water storage purposes during dry weather in Field's.

Sounding contains big speleothems and some pretty helictites.

Duncan can be followed for about 100 feet to a T intersection.

The Foote Mineral Company drilled the surface of Sunbright before commencing operations but hit no voids.

Oldtimers living on the mountain used to store sweetpotatoes in the Sweet Potato.

Bailey Pit is a drop with no leads.

Spurlock is printed on the topo map.

Numerous Indian bones have been taken from the Holding Pits.

Logs and brush block the Redwine Pit.

Heavy rains back up into the sink outside Sparks.

The owner said that he went a half mile into Alley and could have kept going.

Dead cattle are thrown into Bull Hole.

Horse has a running stream.

Jack is small and hard to get into.

Johnson disappears into a small hole on the other side of its only room.

Pond is supposed to be a drop-in.

Riggs Chapel has a collapsed ceiling in both directions.

School is rumoured by local residents to have once been used as a classroom.

Trash Can is partially trash-filled but the local people did not seem to know anything about it.

Excursion trains once ran to Bolling.

Copper Creek Bridge was opened by a RR cut.

Salinger disappears into a sink and is reported to continue deeper.

Gap is supposed to be near the top of a high hill southeast of Gate City.

Grigsby comprises little but two dubious crawlways.

Human traverse in Fleenor's is doubtful.

Possum Creek runs under Jones Cemetery.

Clinch Mountain Darter appears to be sandstone possibly cemented with calcium.

Barb's Hermit, where numerous salamanders were seen, was occupied for many years by a hermit, now dead.

From the mouth of Payne a constant current of cold air is discharged, used by its owners to preserve their fresh meats in the hottest seasons of the year.

Clem's roof slopes limiting headroom.

Click's pinches shortly.

Helsley's was owned by Phoebe Ann Helsley who closed it when typhoid broke out.

Edinburg narrows to a muddy chasm, beyond which few people have ventured.

Gochenour features a sloping squeeze barely large enough for a normal man.

A handline is necessary through Crim Beer Bottles.

There is a small hole in the floor at the rear of Madame Russell which ends in a tiny room.

Dead Air Pit is somewhere near the end of the dirt road.

Getz contains a large volume of air space.

Seabolt has single calcite crystals.

Mrs. Muchanan said no one had been in it and that it had been used to dispose of dead sheep, so Sheep Hole must be large enough for a person to enter.

Hungry Mother is reported in or near Hungry Mother Park.

Stones has a walk-in into a sewer-type passage with an unusual orange cascade formation.

Whomper is plugged with brush.

Dead Air has a swiss cheese pattern and there are some deep holes.

Jake Horne's formations are all dead.

Rosenbaum's Breakdown extends through rough breakdown and some of the breakdown is loose.

Rosenbaum's Streetcar is reported to lead to more cave. A small dry hole high on the wall supposedly resembles a streetcar.

Rosenbaum's Water gets progressively deeper.

No rigging of Pumpkin is needed.

Blowing was completely crawled by Bill Cuddington.

Crab Orchard Indian is nothing but a small muddy hole containing the bones of about 50 warriors, evidently from the bodies of the losers.

We have no information on Crockett's Store.

At some time in the past church services were held in Claypool Hill.

Wooden steps and an electric pump suction pipe descend together into roaring Gillespie Water. There is no swimming.

Pain Lick floods completely after heavy rains.

Hugh Young's waters appear to boil and rise several inches.

Nodular concretions give Cauliflower its name.

Devil's Slide drops and slopes to a dead end.

Human footprints may be seen in the floor of Liberty Hill, and human bones of unusual size have been found.

There is a curtain where the water enters Lost Mill. Formations and fragments of the old turbine and box wheels may still be seen.

Pounding Mill is a short distance from the Frog Level Filling Station.

Fish are found in the Rich Valley stream.

A tremendous drapery, when gently tapped, vibrates throughout Royston's.

Astonishing is the largest cave in the hill.

Carlos Wine Grotto is inhabited by numerous unusually tame cave rats.

Lawson's Horseshoe has a small hole which drops from the surface.

Skyline was discovered by "scientific deduction" and the walls look as though they have been washed down with a fire hose.

Snuff Box contains some bacon rind in the rear.

Hail Bottom sinks into a pothole inside.

Blue Bell Restaurant was reported to be opposite the greenhouse.

The Cave House of the Barter Theater was supposed to connect with a cave under the Martha Washington Inn and continue on under the RR depot, until parts of the cave had fallen in because of street blasting in the days when wolves were rather plentiful and often annoyed travelers through this section.

Water was formerly pumped from Brass Kettle Hole to the owner's house.

Debusk Natural Caverns is near a barn. It is supposed to be a drop.

It is said that an old man and a boy once lived in The Old Man for 3 months.

Legend says one can walk through McConnell Ridge and see daylight on the other side.

Big Kennedy Blowing ends in a large breakdown room.

Little Kennedy was once known as the "Air Hole".

Big Kelly is a not large bat colony.

The owner once planned to commercialize Bloomer but later sealed it up.

An Irvine boy says Macon goes for "some distance".

Rocky Hollow Pit ends in a dome with no leads.

Unnamed was explored to a slope, and there may be more.

Wildcat Saltpeter was mined for saltpeter, but there are no relics.

Zion Church goes in one side of the hill and comes out the other. The entrance is small.

Hairy Hole bells out way down but the bottom keeps going.

At one time one could walk back into Cloud Hole "a good ways".

No water enters Wildcat during the dry summer months.

Cracker's Neck Saltpeter was named East Stone Gap Saltpeter at one time. It is supposed to be "square-mouthed".

There is a long series of beautiful crystal terraces back in Parson's, where thousands of people could be seated.

Sheep Gap was impossible to continue because of the smallness.

Old Pickett offers a mixture of walking, stooping, crawling and squirming.

Betty's Trap is so named because a piece of ceiling came loose and held Betty Sabatino's prisoner momentarily.

Gypsum was observed in Petunia Pine Tree.

A debris cone fills the room at Gardner's.

Sam Six is developed along joints with more remaining.

Spook Woods has deep water.

Town is nearest the highway.

Log Cabin is located at the Log Cabin Restaurant.

Old Snow Farm Pit drops into one large room.

The SpeedWells "became" one with the discovery of a tight body-size connecting hole.

There is considerable gypsum in the Moore's Gypsum dirt.

Bertha's Stoop is near Blacksmith Shop in Buckeye Hollow.

There is no information on McHone Unnamed.

(NOTE: The source for this work being the monumental volume Caves of Virginia by Henry H. Douglas & The Virginia Cave Survey of The National Speleological Society--Falls Church, Va. 1964, 761pp.--C.C.)



